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## Occupational Employment and Wages in Birmingham-Hoover – May 2016

Workers in the Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$22.33 in May 2016, about 6 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.86, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 16 of the 22 major occupational groups, including arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; computer and mathematical; and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance. One group—farming, fishing, and forestry—had a significantly higher wage than its respective national average.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 5 of the 22 occupational groups, including healthcare practitioners and technical; sales and related; and office and administrative support. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including education, training and library; food preparation and serving related; and management. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

**Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016**

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Birmingham	United States	Birmingham	Percent difference <sup>(1)</sup>
Total, all occupations .....	100.0	100.0	\$23.86	\$22.33*	-6
Management .....	5.1	4.3*	56.74	56.97	0
Business and financial operations .....	5.2	4.8*	36.09	32.91*	-9
Computer and mathematical .....	3.0	2.4*	42.25	36.70*	-13
Architecture and engineering .....	1.8	1.5*	40.53	37.46*	-8
Life, physical, and social science .....	0.8	0.4*	35.06	30.69*	-12
Community and social service .....	1.4	0.8*	22.69	21.19*	-7
Legal .....	0.8	0.8	50.95	45.20*	-11
Education, training, and library .....	6.2	4.8*	26.21	25.38	-3
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media .....	1.4	1.2	28.07	19.89*	-29
Healthcare practitioners and technical .....	5.9	8.5*	38.06	36.88	-3
Healthcare support .....	2.9	2.7	14.65	12.93*	-12
Protective service .....	2.4	2.6	22.03	17.02*	-23
Food preparation and serving related .....	9.2	8.2*	11.47	10.31*	-10
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance .....	3.2	2.8*	13.47	11.71*	-13
Personal care and service .....	3.2	2.4*	12.74	11.09*	-13
Sales and related .....	10.4	12.2*	19.50	19.35	-1
Office and administrative support .....	15.7	16.6*	17.91	17.16*	-4
Farming, fishing, and forestry .....	0.3	0.1*	13.37	16.36*	22

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016 - Continued**

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Birmingham	United States	Birmingham	Percent difference <sup>(1)</sup>
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	4.0	23.51	20.76*	-12
Installation, maintenance, and repair .....	3.9	4.7*	22.45	22.47	0
Production .....	6.5	6.7	17.88	17.00*	-5
Transportation and material moving .....	6.9	7.6*	17.34	15.28*	-12

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

\* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—healthcare practitioners and technical—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Birmingham-Hoover had 42,710 jobs in healthcare practitioners and technical, accounting for 8.5 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 5.9-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$36.88, compared to the national wage of \$38.06.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the healthcare practitioners and technical group included registered nurses (16,460), licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (3,160), and pharmacy technicians (1,920). Among the higher paying jobs were surgeons and general pediatricians, with mean hourly wages of \$130.41 and \$115.62, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were pharmacy technicians (\$13.25) and emergency medical technicians and paramedics (\$13.70). (Detailed occupational data for healthcare practitioners and technical are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_13820.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_13820.htm).)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the healthcare practitioners and technical group. For instance, nurse practitioners were employed at 1.9 times the national rate in Birmingham, and pharmacists, at 1.6 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, occupational therapists had a location quotient of 1.0 in Birmingham, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Alabama Department of Labor.

## Note on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

## Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels, and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at [www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm).

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2016 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, and November 2013. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 73 percent based on establishments and 69 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area included 3,496 establishments with a response rate of 70 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to [www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm).

The May 2016 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/soc](http://www.bls.gov/soc) and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at [www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm).

## Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Birmingham-Hoover, Ala. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Bibb, Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, and Walker Counties.

## Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at [www.bls.gov/regions/southeast](http://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast). Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at [www.bls.gov/oes/oes\\_ques.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm). Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods\\_statement.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf).

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request . Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

**Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2016**

Occupation <sup>(1)</sup>	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level <sup>(2)</sup>	Location quotient <sup>(3)</sup>	Hourly	Annual <sup>(4)</sup>
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations .....	42,710	1.4	\$36.88	\$76,700
Chiropractors .....	(5)	(5)	34.79	72,360
Dentists, general .....	470	1.2	82.80	172,220
Dietitians and nutritionists .....	380	1.7	24.84	51,670
Optometrists .....	(5)	(5)	52.26	108,710
Pharmacists .....	1,750	1.6	54.41	113,180
Family and general practitioners .....	200	0.5	71.10	147,890
Internists, general .....	110	0.7	(6)	(6)
Obstetricians and gynecologists .....	40	0.6	(5)	(5)
Pediatricians, general .....	(5)	(5)	115.62	240,490
Psychiatrists .....	(5)	(5)	88.03	183,100
Surgeons .....	290	1.9	130.41	271,260
Physicians and surgeons, all other .....	2,410	2.0	127.40	264,990
Physician assistants .....	300	0.8	51.72	107,570
Occupational therapists .....	410	1.0	40.39	84,010
Physical therapists .....	950	1.2	40.72	84,700
Radiation therapists .....	90	1.5	38.83	80,770
Recreational therapists .....	40	0.6	24.54	51,050
Respiratory therapists .....	750	1.7	23.24	48,330
Speech-language pathologists .....	590	1.2	32.67	67,960
Veterinarians .....	270	1.1	37.32	77,620
Registered nurses .....	16,460	1.6	28.76	59,810
Nurse anesthetists .....	680	4.8	75.28	156,590
Nurse practitioners .....	1,040	1.9	45.36	94,350
Audiologists .....	30	0.7	37.01	76,970
Medical and clinical laboratory technologists .....	1,090	1.8	28.37	59,020
Medical and clinical laboratory technicians .....	850	1.5	17.86	37,150
Dental hygienists .....	970	1.3	22.30	46,380
Cardiovascular technologists and technicians .....	220	1.1	26.36	54,820
Diagnostic medical sonographers .....	360	1.5	28.86	60,040
Nuclear medicine technologists .....	100	1.4	31.84	66,220
Radiologic technologists .....	1,170	1.6	24.33	50,610
Magnetic resonance imaging technologists .....	190	1.5	30.18	62,780
Emergency medical technicians and paramedics .....	650	0.7	13.70	28,500
Dietetic technicians .....	40	0.3	(5)	(5)
Pharmacy technicians .....	1,920	1.3	13.25	27,560
Psychiatric technicians .....	360	1.6	14.74	30,650
Surgical technologists .....	630	1.7	17.77	36,960
Veterinary technologists and technicians .....	290	0.8	13.68	28,450
Ophthalmic medical technicians .....	200	1.3	15.69	32,640
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses ..	3,160	1.3	18.92	39,350
Medical records and health information technicians ..	920	1.3	18.07	37,590
Opticians, dispensing .....	(5)	(5)	15.24	31,690
Orthotists and prosthetists .....	(5)	(5)	40.97	85,230
Health technologists and technicians, all other .....	330	0.8	21.30	44,300
Occupational health and safety specialists .....	280	1.0	36.33	75,570
Athletic trainers .....	110	1.3	(7)	40,480
Healthcare practitioners and technical workers, all other .....	300	2.4	15.44	32,110

**Footnotes:**

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Birmingham-Hoover, AL Metropolitan Statistical Area, see [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_13820.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_13820.htm)

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimate not released.

(6) This wage is equal to or greater than \$100.00 per hour or \$208,000 per year.

(7) Wages for some occupations that do not generally work year-round, full-time, are reported either as hourly wages or annual salaries depending on how they are typically paid.